THE FIRST PRINTING IN ALBERTA

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By

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THE FIRST PRINTING PRESS to come into the great Province of Alberta was carted to Edmonton in the early winter of 1880 by Hon. Frank Oliver, a pioneer who is still rendering service to the Dominion on the Board of Railway Comissioners. The press, type, and a small supply of paper was transported from Winnipeg in an ox-cart, the railroad, at the time, having not penetrated that far into the west.

On December 6, 1880, appeared the first product of that press—the initial number of *The Bulletin.* I have seen a great many pioneer newspapers, but this one holds the palm as the smallest known paper of serious intent,

issued regularly. The page size was five and one-quarter by six and one-half inches. There were four pages to the issue and two columns to the page.

According to the statement in the masthead, this diminutive newspaper was published by "Taylor & Oliver, Proprietors." It is stated that "*The Bulletin* will be published every Monday morning from the 1st of December until the 1st of May. Subscriptions for the season, $2.00. Season advertisements, $5.00 per inch. Transient advertisements, .10 per line each insertion. Business cards not over four lines, $2.50. Payments strictly in advance. Notices of births, marriages and deaths free. — Taylor & Oliver, Proprietors." Under the heading "About Ourselves," there follows the publishers' salutatory, which read as follows: "Last winter, after the telegraph line had been extended to Edmonton and an office established, an arrangement was made by which a weekly bulletin was sent over the line, so that the people here might be informed at the earliest possible date of what-

THE BULLETIN.

VOL I. EDMONTON, N. W T., DECEMBER 13, 1880. NUMBER 2.

TELEGRAPHIC.

WINNIPEG, December 4th, 1880 — Manitoba Legislature meets on December 16th, to pass an act for the extension of the boundaries of Manitoba, which will be ratified by Dominion Parliament next session.

Election for Local House to fill Captain Scott's place takes place to-day. McMillan, independent is sure of election

Ross was defeated by Trickett on Nov. 29th

Hanlan and Leacock will row for five hundred pounds and the championship of the world on Jan. 17th. Hanlan beat Tricket for the championship of the world on Nov. 15th,

Leacock won the International Regatta.

The "Globe" says there is unimpeachable authority for stating that the following are the items of the Syndicate bargain: —"From Nipissing to Thunder Bay. six hundred miles, $20,000 and 30,000 acres per mile; from Red River to the Rocky Mountains, 1000 miles $6600 and five thousand acres per mile; British Columbia section not already under contrct four hundred miles $16,000 and twenty thousand acres per mile. The whole land grant is to be taken from the fertile belt between Red River and the Rocky Mountains.

Several Montreal, Winnipeg, and Dundee, Scotland business men apply for a charter by letters patent as the North-West Navigation Co. to carry on forwarding business on the Assinaboine and Saskatchewan rivers and their tributaries, and on Lakes Manitoba, Winnipegosis, Winnipeg and other sheets of water.

WINNIPEG, 10.– Captain McMillan was elected for Winnipeg by 162 over both other candidates.

Ross defeated Tricket by two boat lengths in the race on December 4th.

Wm. Gillit, boot and shoemaker of Portage la Prarie is under arrest for stealing goods from Patterson and McLaughlan of that place. He acknowledged having stolen about three thousand dollars worth at different times.

Application will be made to Parliament for the incorporation of a company to construct and operate a railway from the C. P. R., west of the Assinaboine River, north-westerly to Great Slave Lake and Peace River—also from the Elbow of the South Saskatchewan to the Forks, thence north-easterly to Hudson's Bay.

Parliament was opened yesterday. The speech from the throne stated that the contract for the construction of the C. P. R. had been made with men of the highest financial standing in Europe, the United States and Canada. The principal measures to be introduced are for the improvement of the criminal law, to place mode of procedure for naturalization of German settlers on more satisfactory footing, to extend the boundaries of Manitoba, to facilitate the winding up of Joint Stock Banks and incorporated companies, to amend Railway Act of 1874, and to provide for encouraging the Indians of the North-West to go more fully into agriculture.

Valin (Conservative) is elected for Montmorency. Sutherland (Reformer) is elected for North Oxford.

The House adjourns about the 21st until Jan. 9.

BATTLEFORD, December 11, 1880.—Mail left for the West this morning.

YESTERDAY Mr. J. A. McDougal took steps for the arrest of Harry Johnson who is supposed to have "slid out" to Montana on Saturday night, leaving a number of sorrowing creditors. Johnson was accompanied by H. Harmand who left things square behind him.

MR. J. A. MITCHELL is busily engaged in taking a census of this and the neighboring settlements.

MR. J. J. MCHUGH, Indian Farm Instrucior, moved into his new residence on the 1st inst. It is one of the most commodious farm houses in this district.

GENERAL NEWS.

Mr. Dewdney will spend the winter at Ottawa.

Iron is on the ground for the C.P.R. bridge at Rat Portage.

The immigration to Manitoba last season was about seven thousand.

A direct special mail has been established between Toronto and Winnipeg.

The Silver Islet mine on Lake Superior has a shaft down 800 feet with as good returns as ever.

A contract for taking out 250,000 ties for the Manitoba South-western railway has been let.

Construction on the first hundred miles west of the Great North-western Telegraph Line has been commenced.

A company has been formed to run a railroad from Emerson to Rapid [City, thence noth-westerly to the C.P.R. line.

At Keithby Creek, British Columbia, the ground was covered with snow on July 4th, and on the 7th of September ice formed an eighth of an inch thick, killing the potato crop.

Second Issue of Alberta's First Newspaper

ever notable events were transpiring at the time in the world at large. But this plan was found to be expensive to a few and, for various reasons, unsatisfactory to all. It was thought to be a better plan to have the bulletin printed so that every subscriber to the fund could be supplied with a copy. To this end a small press and a quantity of printing material has been procured, a special correspondent has been engaged in Winnipeg, and every Monday morning, from this issue until the 1st of May, we will issue a small sheet in newspaper form, which will contain a bulletin, giving the most notable occurances *[sic]* in the world at large and matters concerning the Northwest Territories in particular, local news from all parts of the Upper Saskatchewan country, opinions on matters and things connected with the Northwest, and a synopsis of the news brought in by the previous mail."

In answer to some queries submitted by me, Hon. Frank Oliver has been kind enough to give me some specific information regarding

the plant at which *The Bulletin* was printed during this first winter. The press was a toy "model" manufactured in Philadelphia. Both type and press were purchased in Winnipeg. The typesetting equipment consisted of "one pair of cases of lean nonpareil." Inking was done by hand.

The supply of paper was purchased from the Winnipeg *Free Press* and cut to size in that office. A supply for six months at least had to be taken to Edmonton, as freighting by oxen was cut off in winter.

There were two hundred subscribers to the first volume for the six months' period of publication. Publication was suspended in the summer while Mr. Oliver was away on a trip to Winnipeg. Advertising revenue was negligible for this first volume.

There is here shown the first page of the second issue of *The Bulletin* in the same size as the original, reproduced from the file in the Manitoba Provincial Library. The first issue is present in that file, but it is a little too faded for satisfactory reproduction. This set of the first

volume of *The Bulletin* was acquired a number of years ago for the extravagant price of ten dollars!

During the summer of 1881 publication was suspended, but on October 29 of that year appeared Vol. II, No. 1, of the *Edmonton Bulletin*. The newspaper had been enlarged to a page size of six and one-half by nine and one-half inches, with three columns to the page. Oliver and Dunlop were listed as proprietors, and it was noted that communications should be addressed to Frank Oliver, Edmonton, or A. Dunlop, Winnipeg.

The subscription rate was the same as the preceeding season and the advertising scale approximately similar. In the masthead was the reminder: "Job work done neatly, quickly and cheaply at *The Bulletin* office." In resuming publication the editor had this message for his readers: "According to our promise of last spring we issue *The Bulletin* in an enlarged form, and, we hope, with an improved appearance. No effort will be spared to keep our readers posted

on all that is transpiring in the Upper Saskatchewan country. While our telegrams will give all important items of general news, special attention will be paid to matters relating to the North-West. Our opinions in regard to subjects that may claim our attention will be expressed truthfully and fearlessly, with a single eye to the best interests of this western country. At present we have only arranged to publish during the winter, but, if sufficient support is received, the paper will be continued without interruption and made a permanent institution."

The publication of a newspaper was not the exclusive business of Frank Oliver, for we find him advertising, from his store on Main Street that he "has on hand a good stock of groceries, hardware, boots and shoes, for sale at lowest prices. Farm produce taken at cash prices."

As is well known, the *Edmonton Bulletin* is now one of the most enterprising and prosperous journals in the western provinces.